

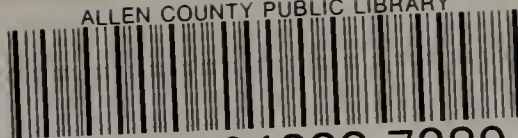
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American Families Series

THE
KIRKPATRICKS

BY
JOHN L. SHAWVER

*Origin of the Family and the Name, as given
by old Family Records long in possession
of the Family, together
with a Sketch of
SIR ROGER KIRKPATRICK
and his times*

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Introductory

The Kirkpatrick Family has representatives in every part of the globe. The family has a history of more than one thousand years. A number of the individual members have achieved world wide fame. The Empress Eugenie of France was, for eighteen years, the most prominent figure in the entire world. Her life story is one of the most interesting ever recorded. It is more fascinating than any fairy story ever written and positively substantiated by public records, and well remembered by many people yet living. Another widely known member of the family is Professor William J. Kirkpatrick, who originated Gospel Song Service for use in the Churches and Sunday Schools in 1855, and has published one hundred and twenty-one collections of Gospel Hymns, and conducted the song services in thousands of religious revivals. Hon. Andrew Kirkpatrick, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey, and President of the Board of Trustees of Princeton University, was another distinguished member of the family.

It is estimated that ten thousand people in the United States bear the name of Kirkpatrick, and, by the laws of descent, more than one hundred and fifty thousand other people who possess the blood of this family are known by some other name.

In this series of Family Sketches the author will make an effort to place in permanent form the life work of many individuals of different family names whose history has been mingled with that of our nation and should be preserved for the benefit of future generations as a part of our national history.

THE AUTHOR

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The Kirkpatricks

FOR more than a thousand years the Kirkpatricks have held an important place in the history of the world. Knights, soldiers, teachers, ministers, musicians, doctors, lawyers, judges, professors, editors, publishers, statesmen, princes, dukes, baronets, diplomats, and at least one empress who, for eighteen years, held the most conspicuous place in the history of the world. The family originated in Albin, or, as it has since been called, Scotland, and possessed estates in Nithsdale, ten miles north of Dumfries and four miles southeast of Drumlanrig. The old castle took its name, "Closeburn," from Clota, near the source of the River Clyde, where the founder of the family was born some time during the reign of King Donald I, who took the throne in the year 860 A. D. Well-founded tradition which has long been carefully preserved informs us that the name originated in this manner: Donald Kirk, who was a soldier in the king's service and was noted for his fearless deeds, one day saved the life of King Donald, who, to reward him, bestowed upon him and his family forever a goodly estate of lands in Dumfriesshire. Kirk is the Scotch name for church and there were many people by that name. Kirk was frequently combined with other names to denote places. Kirkland, Kirkeudbright and many other similar examples are found in Scotland. Some have thought that the family name of Kirkpatrick was taken from the name of a church Kirkpatrick. But the origin of the family was long before any such place had that

name. Later a town or village in Dumfriesshire received that name. When the brave young Donald Kirk received his estate from the hands of his king he naturally looked forward to the time when he might become one of the great Scottish Chiefs. Seeking to find a name somewhat more distinctive than that of Kirk which was rather commonplace, he conceived the idea of honoring his mother as well as his father by combining both their names in one. His mother was of Irish descent and had born the name of Patrick before marriage. So young Donald assumed the name Kirk-Patrick, and later it became Kirkpatrick as it is written today. Some members of the family at a later day added a prefix and wrote it DeKirpatrick and some even became so extravagant as to write it De Kyrkepatrick. Most of them, however, were satisfied that it was long enough without any extras.

The early history of the family has been lost in obscurity just as it was with many others. Few people could read and a still smaller number could write. The name of Ivone Kirkpatrick appears as a witness on a charter granted by Robert Bruce, the elder, in the year of 1130. A grandson of the above was granted a confirmatory charter to the estates of "Closeburn" in 1232 by King Alexander II. It was at this time that the Closeburn Coat of Arms was authorized, though the crest was changed at a later date. Sir Roger Kirkpatrick, who was at this time head of the house of Closeburn, had a younger brother by the name of Duncan who married Isabel, the daughter and heiress of Sir David Torthorwald, and thus established the second house of peers in the Kirkpatrick family.

It is difficult to distinguish, oftentimes, between the men and deeds of the House of Closeburn and those of the House of Torthorwald. Sir Walter Scott, who added luster to the name Kirkpatrick, and Hume, with other historians, credit Sir Roger Kirkpatrick, the friend of Sir William Wallace, to the House of Closeburn, while Jane Porter in her historical novel, "Scottish Chiefs," credits him to the House of Torthorwald. A moment's thought may relieve all doubt as to this question. The crest on the coat of arms shows a dagger dripping with drops of blood and represents the instrument used in killing the tyrant Comyn. The motto on the coat of arms, "I mak sicker," meaning, "I make sure," also refers to this same circumstance. These belong to the House of Closeburn. The emblem of the House of Torthorwald is a rose, and the motto is, "Tich et perse," the meaning of which is obscure. But it seems certain that both branches of the family were brave and fearless defenders of Scottish rights and it is much to be regretted that more of the earlier history has not been recorded and handed down for the benefit of later generations.

Tradition holds that when young Roger Kirkpatrick was engaged with Sir William Wallace in the effort to drive out of Scotland the roving bands of English troopers who were murdering innocent women and children, destroying the growing crops and the live stock and, frequently, even burning the buildings, he one day noticed a dense smoke in the direction of his father's home. He obtained permission to investigate and speeding his horse in that direction he found his father's home in ashes. The

dead bodies of both his father and mother were on the stone steps in front of the burning embers. The younger children had hidden in the copse, but on seeing the older brother on the premises and that the troopers had disappeared, they ventured out to inform him of the sad facts. From them the young Scot learned that, early in the morning, a band of English marauders in command of the heartless Cressingham, had come to the home and demanded food. This had been set before them and they had eaten their fill. The parents were then murdered and the house looted. Everything of value was carried away and the house was set on fire. The young Scot was sorely grieved. He made a vow before his brothers and sisters that he would never rest until he had avenged the murder of his parents. He and his brother Duncan set out to find shelter for the younger children among their kindred. The parents were given decent burial in the cemetery beside the kirk. Then he hastened to join his countrymen under the matchless Wallace who was seeking to free Scotland from the ruthless invaders who had so frequently demonstrated that no crime was great enough to appease their thirst for blood and plunder. Is it any wonder that from that fateful day he should never permit an opportunity to pass which promised any thing in the way of revenge for the wrongs he had endured? With the murder of the father young Roger assumed the title and inherited the estate. A number of the men from the estate were already with him under Wallace. The number of these men was increased from time to time until at some seasons he had four hundred

of his own men in the service of his country. These men were all mounted on horses and armed with long spears and battle axes. Each man also carried a long hunting knife or a dagger. Each clan had its bugler who sounded the signals of command issued by the chieftain. Some clans were much larger than that of the Kirkpatricks, but there was not another clan in all Scotland that could compare with that of Sir Roger Kirkpatrick in bravery or execution. In dauntless bravery, ceaseless activity and unflinching execution this band had no rival.

Sir Roger Kirkpatrick of Closeburn

WHEN Bruce and the Red Comyn arranged to meet in the church of the Grey Friars in Dumfries to settle the dispute as to which should rule Scotland, they perhaps thought it more likely the dispute could be settled in a church more peacefully than on the highway. It is even possible that each went with the determination of making some sacrifices in order to reach a peaceable settlement, but it is more likely that each went with the determination of compelling the other to make all the sacrifices. Bruce, at least, thought it would be wise to take two of his most trusted friends along with him, for he knew by past experience that Comyn was of a treacherous disposition and not to be trusted very far. Bruce left his two friends outside the church doors. They were Sir Roger Kirkpatrick of Closeburn and James de Lindsay. The

conference resulted as Bruce had anticipated it would. Comyn would listen to no other solution of the problem save one that would compel Bruce to retire from the field and permit Comyn to rule Scotland. The discussion resulted in a new and greater hatred. Finally Bruce, seeing Comyn reach for his dagger, drew his own, and warding off the stroke of Comyn, drove his own dagger into the breast of his rival. Rushing to the door he was met by his friends. De Lindsay asked: "What tidings?" "Bad tidings," said Bruce: "I doubt I have slain Comyn." "Doubtest Thou?" said Kirkpatrick; "I will make sure of it." And thus feeling justified by the wrongs he had suffered, he and de Lindsay entered the church and finding Comyn still alive they ended his life and closed a career of crime and misgovernment.

This act has sometimes been cited as brutal and unjustified. Possibly it was, but it was a mild infraction compared with the acts of men under the rule of Comyn which took place every day; many of them by his orders. That was a period of bloodshed and treachery. A kingdom was at stake. The Scots were fighting for their homes and their firesides. For years they had been compelled to defend their homes with their lives. A man's home is his castle. Any man who enters the home of another without permission is a lawbreaker. Every English trooper who entered Scotland was a lawbreaker. In the enlightened days of the twentieth century and in Christian America, worse crimes are committed almost every day. That this is true is a disgrace to civilization. Americans boast that this is the land of the free. Free for what?

Not free for peace and comfort. Only a few days ago a peaceful farmer and his wife were shot down in cold blood by a man who looted their home and then quietly proceeded to make a bed where he could rest in comfort until such time as the owners might return to their home and there meet death at the hands of a beastly man. Reports are coming of people freezing to death amidst the greatest supply of fuel that the Creator ever provided for the comfort and convenience of His children. Not long ago two young men in Chicago who enjoyed all the luxuries that wealth can buy; who had been highly educated; who moved in the best of society; deliberately planned to murder a neighbor's son and collect ransom. All of these crimes are far more brutal than that of Bruce and his friends. The last mentioned crimes have been committed in spite of the centuries of civilization. The first in the midst of the Dark Ages when people were compelled to resort to the practice of self defense. Is it possible our civilization is a myth? Is it possible our courts of justice are a failure? Is it possible the land of the free is to be transformed into the land of the dead? When those in high positions close their eyes to criminal actions merely for the purpose of shielding friends and relatives the result is bound to be increased disregard of law and government.

That the owner of Closeburn was one of the most ardent and devoted followers of Sir William Wallace and one of the most fearless defenders of Scottish independence, is attested by so many incidents of bravery that no one can doubt that he should become an object of dread to the com-

manders of English armies. When any dangerous expeditions were to be undertaken, or when any hazardous battle was to be fought, he it was who offered to lead the van or to place himself and his men in the most exposed situations. He feared no danger himself and he possessed the power of inspiring his men with the same disregard of danger. After the fall and surrender of Berwick, when the army of Scots was almost exhausted and the weary warriors were sadly in need of rest and sleep, a herald arrived in camp with momentous information. The message stated that the Earl of Mar was held a prisoner in Stirling Castle with other members of his family, and that the Earl was to be executed on the following day. It was known that an English army of 60,000 men under the Lord de Warrenne was approaching from the South for the purpose of reinforcing Cressingham who was governor of Stirling. It was deemed expedient to make an effort to capture Stirling before this large reinforcement should reach the city. Sir Roger Kirkpatrick was the first to mount his horse and lead his men on that tiresome journey. They marched all the night long and came in sight of Stirling an hour before sunrise. The men were given an hour to rest and take some refreshments. The attack was made at early dawn. The guards were driven in, the gates broken down and DeVallence and most of the men of the garrison were taken prisoners. Governor Cressingham took refuge in the castle. He ordered that the Earl of Mar be taken out upon the walls of the castle with a rope around his neck. Kirkpatrick had his men bring out De Vallence with a simi-

lar ornament about his neck. Cressingham asks time to consider capitulation. The Scots grant till sundown. Leaving a few men to guard the prisoners the Scots hasten to Cambus Kenneth where the River Forth is crossed by a long wooden bridge. Some of the men were set at work to cut the wooden posts which supported one side of the bridge. The posts were permitted to stand upon the snags after being cut entirely off at the water level. In the meantime, other men had been busy twisting strong ropes from the wild grass which lined the river banks. These ropes were then tied to the cut off posts and the other end was held by strong men hidden in the timber lining the water. A small body of men was placed at either end of the bridge to guard the approaches. The main body of the army was hidden from view in the forest.

Governor Cressingham had left the castle after its surrender by means of a secret tunnel and had crossed the river above the bridge by boat. He then hastened away to meet De Warrenne with his approaching relief. De Warrenne had placed 20,000 men under Montgomery with orders to make forced marches to reach Stirling. Lord Hilton was to take 10,000 men and cross the river at a ford west of Stirling, and prevent any Scots from approaching from that direction. De Warrene himself, with 30,000 men and the supply train of pack horses was to follow. Cressingham had met with the body of men under Montgomery and urged that leader to make all possible haste to reach Stirling and surprise the Scots and recapture the castle. As these troops approached the bridge the Scots

who guarded the bridge on the south retired across the bridge and joined those on the north side. As the English crossed over the bridge the Scots offered but feeble resistance and continued to fall back until nearly half of Montgomery's men were on the north side. Then the Scotch buglers sounded the call for battle. The men who manned the ropes pulled the posts out from one side of the bridge, which precipitated men and horses into the water below. The Scots hidden in the forests surrounded Montgomery's army on three sides and made such fierce charges after their short rest that the English were taken by complete surprise. As the horsemen charged and wheeled Graham with his archers sent showers of arrows among the invaders. Then the horsemen charged again. Montgomery saw his men falling on all sides of him. He heard the shrieks and groans of those who had been precipitated into the river. He knew that portion of his army on the other side of the river could not come to his aid save by a long circuitous route by way of the fords. He saw the banner of DeVallence already in the hands of the Scots and so laid down his sword. Those on the south side of the river finding no means of crossing the river, retreated, expecting to meet De Warrenne and join his forces. But De Warrenne, having learned from a straggler that the bridge had been destroyed, turned eastward to seek to cross by ford or boats.

After Montgomery's surrender Kirkpatrick, who had heard the voice of Cressingham on the bridge just before the call to battle, began a search among those who reached the shore in the hopes of obtaining revenge for the death of

his father and mother. Those escaping from the river were carefully guarded and sent off unarmed to join Montgomery's men in the prison camp. Kirkpatrick was about to give up his search and join his troopers again, when he happened to see a man crawling among some reeds. He investigated and there found the object of his quest. He dismounted. Cressingham begged for mercy. Sir Roger reminded him that he had never shown mercy even to the old and helpless. With one blow of his battle ax he severed the head of the wretched man.

Graham had taken his archers up the river to guard the ford. A scout reported the approach of De Warrenne from the east and the Scots prepared to meet them. The buglers again sounded the call to battle. Graham's buglers conveyed the call to him, and leaving two hundred archers to guard the ford he hastened with his main force to join the main army. De Warrenne's men approached from the east as rapidly as they could cross the river. The Scotch cavalry charged the long array of English from their hiding places in the forests. Graham's archers arrived in time to meet the advance with showers of arrows. The English had already seen the bodies of many of their comrades floating down the river. De Warrenne saw the banners of Montgomery and DeVallence already in the hands of the Scots and believing that his army was surrounded by superior numbers and his men were throwing away their arms as impediments to a hasty retreat, he called a hasty council only to learn that part of his officers were already retreating. He then laid down his sword and surrendered not only his

own forces but the remnants of Montgomery's force which were late in joining him. The officers and men laid down their arms and joined their comrades in the prison camp.

A scout arriving from the east reported Lord Hilton's army had forced a passage of the ford and was approaching Stirling. The Scots deployed on both sides of the eastern approach in the friendly protection of the forest. Hilton in the morning had impressed a Scotch boy who was herding cattle and compelled him to show the way to the ford. The boy suspected the purpose of the English commander and purposefully conducted the army widely out of the way, then, while the army was eating their noon-day rations, he quietly escaped them altogether. Thus Hilton was much delayed in reaching the ford, where the archers greeted him in their usual hearty manner, but gave way before the superior numbers. Thus, with no knowledge of what had already transpired at Stirling, this fresh army marched gayly on thinking only of the rest and security they would soon enjoy within the strong walls of Stirling. Darkness was rapidly gathering as they marched through the forests. Suddenly the call to battle was issued by Scotch buglers. Taken up and repeated by the buglers on both sides of the poorly lighted highway. The buglers continued the call and the voices of five thousand Scots joined in the call. The horsemen charged from both sides and Lord Hilton's banner was carried away in the first onslaught and his ranks terribly broken. As the horsemen gathered for another assault Graham's archers again made good use of their training. In the darkness it

was impossible for the English to estimate the strength of their foes. But from the calls of the bugle on both sides, echoed and re-echoed continuously, fear followed surprise and panic followed fear. The white flag of surrender was raised and Lord Hilton's army laid down their arms to join their comrades in the prison camp.

It was one of the greatest victories of all history. 65,000 English had surrendered to 5,000 Scots in twelve hours. The officers were placed under guard within the city walls. The arms and men were under separate guards outside the walls. The capitulation of Stirling Castle was the climax of a glorious day. The Earl of Mar, his wife and his daughter, and also his sister, all of whom were held prisoners in the castle, were liberated at once. The English officers were all given liberal terms and kind treatment. Sir Roger doubtless slept better that night than he had done for some time. He had waited long and patiently for vengeance on Cressingham. He not only despised him for the cruel treatment of his parents but he despised him for similar abuses in a score of other cases.

One of the last recorded public achievements of Sir Roger Kirkpatrick is the part that he took in the Battle of Bannockburn, in the year 1314. Sir William Wallace had been executed on the twenty-third of August upon the Tower Hill at London. Lord Montgomery had received such magnanimous treatment at the hands of the Scots during his imprisonment at Stirling; he had learned so much of the noble character of the Scotch noblemen; he had learned to love

Wallace, Kirkpatrick, Ruthven, Douglas, Lennox and others for their bravery and love of their native land, that he could not find it in his heart to aid Edward longer in his efforts to crush Scotland. He had renounced his English honors and with the dead body of Wallace on his own boat sailed for Scotland with the avowed purpose of offering his services to that distracted but patriotic country. He joined the Scotch army now under the leadership of King Robert Bruce, not as the Earl of Montgomery, but as plain Gilbert Hambleton. Bruce extended to Hambleton a warm welcome and offered to share his own heritage with him.

Before the burial rites for Wallace could take place the Scots were again summoned to meet their English foes. King Edward, leading in person an army of one hundred thousand men, had forced a rapid passage through the Lowlands. He had threatened to bury Scotland beneath the bodies of her own people, or, by one great and decisive victory, bring that country again into his own dominions. The Scottish army consisted of only thirty thousand men. It appeared hopeless to contest the field with the mighty hosts of Southrons. But the Scots preferred death to servitude. For quiet submission would unquestionably mean the early execution of all the Scotch noblemen. A hasty council of war was held. It was decided to select the plain of Bannockburn as the most suitable place to meet the oncoming enemy. Kirkpatrick and Bothwell were sent out to survey the field and plan the details. Along the brook it was somewhat marshy and they ordered long trenches to be made. These were covered with

brushwood and over the brushwood the native wild grass was strewn. The fresh earth taken from the trenches was also covered with thin layers of the wild grass. The Scots formed their line of battle on the summit of a long hill which overlooked the plain. The center was in command of Ruthven and Stewart. Douglas and Ramsay led their brave clansmen on the right. Lennox and Randolph held the left. Bruce with Lochawe, Kirkpatrick and Bothwell commanded the second line of defense. A long line of sharpened pikes extended the entire length of the field with the exception of narrow passages at either end. These pikes were driven deep into the marshy soil and then concealed with light brushwood and grass. The work of preparation had been performed hastily but with great skill. It was scarcely completed before scouts announced the approach of the enemy.

The English army made a wonderful display as the mighty armed force advanced into the narrow plain. The Earl de Warrenne led the advance while the King himself commanded the main army. As they moved forward the advance lines parted and King Edward II with thirty thousand horsemen armed with lances formed in line in front of the archers. These horsemen were ordered to charge the Scottish lines on the opposite hill. They spurred their chargers to the gallop and the very earth appeared to tremble as that vast body of thirty thousand horsemen advanced rapidly upon the thin lines of Scots beyond the little brook. But they could not see the long lines of deep trenches which the Scots had prepared for them. The horses stumbled into the trenches. Horses and

riders were mingled in the marshes in hopeless confusion. These were trampled under the hoofs of the second lines of horsemen who were unable to stop their speed or change their course and these met their fate in a similar manner in the second line of trenches. The few that were able to clear the trenches met their fate on the long line of sharpened pikes which pierced the breasts of the horses. The English were appalled by the unexpected catastrophe. Instead of seeing the Scots trampled beneath the hoofs of this mighty force the English witnessed a writhing mass of human flesh mingled with dead and dying horses in hopeless confusion. Graham's Archer's who were concealed on a thickly wooded hill now sent showers of arrows, and King Edward himself was seriously wounded. Then Bothwell and Kirkpatrick, each at the head of five thousand well trained Scotch horsemen, lead their forces by way of the open passages at either end of the line of pikes and trenches, the one to the right and the other to the left, and these horsemen charged the flanks of the English. The daring De Vallence, one of King Edward's most successful generals, was severely wounded and born from the field by his aids. It was the good fortune of Bothwell while leading his intrepid Lanark men to find the traitor Monteith who had betrayed Wallace into the hands of his enemies. The Earl caught the false Monteith upon his spear and held him secure until some of his men caught him upon a horse and carried him to the bier of Wallace and beyond the Scotch lines where his blood drained out from an hundred spear thrusts. A large number of old men and women who had

gathered to wait the outcome of the battle, now hearing the shouts of victory and the dimmed sound of the bugle calls, came marching over the top of the hill, and the English thinking another Scotch army was approaching, threw away their arms and fled in great confusion. King Edward, himself, was panic-stricken, and seeing his commanders falling on all sides, put spurs to his horse and escaped to Dunbar where the Earl of March gave him boat passage to London.

The largest portion of the equipment of this great army fell into the hands of the Scots. The historian, John McIntosh, gives the loss of the Scots at about 4000 men. Most of these were of the commands of Bothwell and Kirkpatrick who were engaged in hand to hand conflict after their charge upon the flanks of the enemy. McIntosh gives the loss of the enemy at above 30,000 which included the largest portion of that brilliant band of horsemen who had so fearlessly charged upon the hidden trenches and pikes in the marsh. Bothwell turned his command over to an aide who joined with Kirkpatrick in continued pursuit of the English remnants the entire day and long into the night. The losses of the enemy in this long retreat could not have been included in the statement of McIntosh for the historian Myers tells us: "Edward's army was almost annihilated. It was the most appalling disaster that had befallen the arms of the English people since the memorable defeat of Harold at Hastings." The discomfitted King Edward died of chagrin at Carlisle.

The independence of Scotland really dates from this great victory of Bannockburn, but the English people were too proud to acknowledge

it until after fourteen more years of bloody warfare. In 1328, King Edward III gave up all claim to the Scottish crown, and Scotland took its place among the nations of the world. This position of independence continued for nearly three centuries when, in 1603, the crown of Scotland and that of England were united in a peaceful manner under the rule of James VI, then King of Scotland, who became James I of England, and who thus founded the Stuart dynasty in England. But it was not entirely a peaceful family. For, when England was not at war with some other nation, she was certain to attempt a quarrel with her companion nation. During these domestic quarrels France assumed it as a sacred duty to lend aid and encouragement to Scotland. This brought about the Hundred Years' War which lasted from 1338 to 1453. One of the most important of the battles of this war was the Battle of Crecy. The English had profited by the splendid work of the Scotch archers at Bannockburn and from that time forth archery received more and more attention, so that at the Battle of Crecy the bowmen of the Scotch-English army inflicted upon the French a most terrible and humiliating defeat. Twelve hundred French knights, the flower and the glory of the French nation, and thousands of French foot soldiers armed with spear and battle ax, were left dead upon the field due to the excellence of the work done by the archers who could remain at a safe distance and send death to the enemy in the form of an arrow.

While the development of archery brought about the downfall of feudalism and resulted in

disintegration of the great baronial houses, we must not forget that for thousands of years education and civilization were preserved only because of the fact that these great feudal houses had fostered and preserved them through the long and devastating period of the Dark Ages. So while we hail with more or less pride the rise of the common people from serfdom and vassalage, we must not forget the vast debt we owe to knighthood and nobility for the preservation of some of the civilization of the ancients. It is gradually coming to light through scientific research and systematic excavations that many of the arts were lost through war, avarice, ignorance and negligence. But the fact that feudalism preserved some of the most essential arts has made it possible for the world to recover from the ignorance and debauchery of the dark ages more rapidly than would have otherwise been possible.

The present crime wave which is sweeping over the world is an evidence of the same tendency towards disintegration that produced the long period of darkness. Let America take warning and take steps to retard if not to remove these untoward and significant evidences. "Save yourselves from this untoward generation"—Acts 11:40.



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